

ALLEGHENY RIVER.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF WAR,

RELATIVE TO

The improvement of the Allegheny River, Pennsylvania.

JANUARY 30, 1880.—Referred to the Committee on Commerce and ordered to be printed

WAR DEPARTMENT,
Washington City, January 29, 1880.

The Secretary of War has the honor to transmit to the House of Representatives, in compliance with the resolution of that body dated the 13th instant, calling for a detailed account of the expenditure of the amount appropriated by the Forty-fifth Congress for the improvement of the Allegheny River, Pennsylvania, the amount necessary to complete the work commenced, and the amount necessary to improve said river from Olean, N. Y., to Pittsburgh, Pa., a letter from the Chief of Engineers of the 28th instant, and accompanying copy of report from Maj. W. E. Merrill, Corps of Engineers, containing the information required.

ALEX. RAMSEY,
Secretary of War.

The SPEAKER
Of the House of Representatives.

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF ENGINEERS,
Washington, D. C., January 28, 1880.

SIR: I have to acknowledge the reference to this office for report of the resolution of the House of Representatives of January 13, requesting the Secretary of War "to inform the House, at as early a day as practicable, the manner, in detail, of the expenditure of the money appropriated by the Forty-fifth Congress for the improvement of the navigation of the Allegheny River, in the State of Pennsylvania, and also the amount of money which may be necessary to complete the improvements already commenced, and also the amount which may be neces-

sary to improve the navigation of said river from Olean, in the State of New York, to the headwaters of the Ohio, at Pittsburgh," and to submit the inclosed copy of a report of Maj. William E. Merrill, Corps of Engineers, the officer in charge of the improvement in question, which will afford the information called for.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

H. G. WRIGHT,

Chief of Engineers, Brigadier and Brevet Major-General, U. S. A.

Hon. ALEXANDER RAMSEY,
Secretary of War.

ALLEGHENY RIVER, PENNSYLVANIA AND NEW YORK.

UNITED STATES ENGINEER OFFICE,
Cincinnati, O., January 26, 1880.

GENERAL: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, in which I am directed to submit a report on the Allegheny River, in obedience to the following resolution of the House of Representatives, viz:

January 13, 1880. On motion of Mr. John H. Reagan,

Resolved, That the Secretary of War be, and is hereby, requested to inform the House, at as early a day as practicable, the manner in detail of the expenditure of the money appropriated by the Forty-fifth Congress for the improvement of the navigation of Allegheny River, in the State of Pennsylvania, and also the amount of money which may be necessary to complete the improvements already commenced, and also the amount which may be necessary to improve the navigation of said river from Olean, in the State of New York, to the headwaters of the Ohio River, at Pittsburgh.

Attest:

GEORGE M. ADAMS, *Clerk.*

There are three questions involved in the foregoing resolution:

1. The manner in detail of the expenditure of the money appropriated by the Forty-fifth Congress for the improvement of the navigation of the Allegheny River, in the State of Pennsylvania.

Answer. A dam of cribs filled with stone was built to close the right-hand channel at Six Mile Island, 6 miles above the mouth. It turns water at the three-and-a-half-foot stage.

A riprap dam was built across the left-hand channel at Nicholson's Rapid, 35 miles above the mouth. It turns water at the three-foot stage.

A sand-bag dam for temporary use was built at Garrison Ripple.

The channel at the mouth of the Allegheny was dredged out so as to allow light barges to pass from the Ohio and Monongahela into the Allegheny. A craneboat was purchased and equipped and put to work removing rocks, snags, wrecks, and other obstructions. Her work may be summed up in the following table. The rocks numbered are only the large ones, no count being made of the small ones:

Locality.	Large rocks.	Snags.	Wrecks.	Old pier, cubic yards.
Six Mile Island.....	11	1	.....	.....
Nine Mile Island.....	36	5	.....	.....
Fourteen Mile Island.....	14	2	.....	.....
Poketo Rapids.....	25	Nest.	1	.....
Bull Creek Rapid.....	40	.....	.....	.....
Thence to Jack's Island.....	60	.....	.....	.....
Jack's Island.....	112	.....	.....	.....
Kearn's Bar.....	90	.....	.....	.....
Freeport.....	.....	.....	.....	400
Murphy's Island.....	115	100	.....	.....
Total.....	503	109	1	400

A number of bad rocks at Oil City were removed by a special party. These undertakings used up the whole of the appropriation, which was \$10,000.

2. The amount of money which may be necessary to complete the improvements already commenced.

Answer. The dams at Six Mile Island and Nicholson's Rapid need \$4,000 more to make them complete. If, however, the question relates, as I suppose it does, to the cost of completing the system of improvement which has been inaugurated, I would submit the following:

To finish the 2 dams built last year.....	\$4,000
Pittsburgh to Brady's Bend, 69 miles; 12 dams, at \$3,500.....	\$42,000
Removal of obstructions.....	7,000
	49,000
Brady's Bend to Oil City, 61 miles; 10 dams, at.....	25,000
Removal of rocks.....	3,000
	28,000
	81,000

It will be observed that this estimate covers the distance between Oil City and Pittsburgh, while that given in my report, dated December 19, 1878 (in Doc. No. 21, H. of R., 45th Cong., 3d sess.), only covered the distance between Franklin and Freeport.

3. The amount which may be necessary to improve the navigation of said river from Olean, in the State of New York, to the headwaters of the Ohio River, at Pittsburgh.

Answer. The results of the survey of the Allegheny from the mouth of French Creek up to Olean, which was ordered at the last session of Congress, are not yet worked up. This report will be submitted to Congress in due course, and it is believed that it will contain all the information called for that is not now given.

Respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. E. MERRILL,
Major of Engineers.

Brig. Gen. H. G. WRIGHT,
Chief of Engineers, U. S. A.

